



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

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Michael Sundberg, PCA  
Bristol

District 1199 New England  
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Mike Sundberg and I am a PCA from Bristol.

I have worked as a PCA for one year. I have three jobs and two consumers: my brother, and my significant other. It means a lot to care for someone and to see that care improve their lives. As a PCA I tend to my consumer's hygiene, cook their meals, help them exercise and help keep their places clean, but I do so much more for them too. I am my consumer's bodyguard, bookkeeper, scheduler, and best friend.

The pay is currently 16.25 an hour and we are asking 20 dollars per hour. Cost of living goes up and up each year, taxes go up, price inflation, fuel rising etc, but never the pay raise to match the costs we incur on a daily basis. \$550 dollars (what I bring home each week after taxes) is not a fair wage to handle an unfair society. Even a small wage increase of 50 cents or a dollar without benefits will leave us in a worse position three years down the road than we are in today and won't keep up with inflation. A pay increase to \$20/hour would finally give us a firm foot to stand on.

During our day to day routine we are caring for individuals in the comfort of their own home. Which means we are introducing ourselves to foreign microorganisms and are much more susceptible to falling ill. Currently PCAs have no health insurance which is completely unacceptable. Purell is replaceable but healthcare is expensive. Healthcare is a must whether it's used or not. It's a sense of security should anything unforeseen happen at the wrong place and the wrong time, but the key thing here is affordable healthcare. I have no health insurance, and I'm currently dodging \$3,000 in debt from a hernia surgery I needed. I get daily emails about my bills; when I get them in the mail, I just throw them away.

Things happen, people get sick or we need a break, but we currently have no sick time or any paid time off. Unpaid time off is unsafe in this field. Because if I'm sick and I don't have paid sick time, I am more apt to make an unprofessional

decision compromising my health and my clients by arriving to work when I should have stayed home.

Please do the right thing by PCAs and the consumers we care for, and allocate the funding to provide PCAs a livable wage and quality benefits.

Thank you for your time.